

MEDICAL FOSTER HOME NEWSLETTER
FOR ALL CAREGIVERS & VETERANS

April—June 2015

Volume II, Issue II

April Showers Bring May Flowers

Spring has sprung. The snow and ice are melting. Plants are blooming, birds are singing and the sun is beginning to shine. It is the season for planting, eating fresh fruits and vegetables, enjoying the outdoors and trying new things. Send us a picture of yourself participating in one of your favorite spring activities and tell us why you enjoy it. Send it to Octavius Smith, the MFH Recreation Therapist, (Octavius.Smith@va.gov) then look for a special feature in our next newsletter featuring YOU!

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NEWS

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Happy Spring! Hopefully by the time this newsletter goes to print the grass is green and the flowers are blooming. I want to take this opportunity to provide some updates on Fargo's Medical Foster Home program.

In January of this year we received Level 4 Final Recognition from the VA Central Office in Washington, DC. This is the level that we have been working towards since the program began two years ago. It means that we have met all the requirements to be fully recognized as a VA Medical Foster Home program and it also impacts how the program is funded. We could not have done it without the incredible Medical Foster Home caregivers that have either accepted a Veteran already into their home or who remain willing to accept a Veteran when they have an opening.

Right now we have four approved Medical Foster Homes. We are actively reaching out to the community to find more people who want to care for Veterans in their homes. Please help us spread the word and encourage them to contact me at 701-232-3241, Ext 9-4394.

Loni Larson, Medical Foster Home Program Coordinator

MFH SPOTLIGHT



VA2K 5TH ANNUAL EVENT 2015

MARK your calendar and get ready to walk or roll. The VA2K will be held on Wednesday, May 20, at the Fargo VA Health Care Center (2101 Elm St. N.). Kick-off events will begin at 10:45AM in front of the west entrance of the Fargo VA near the flag pole. Register and Walk *anytime* between 11:00AM-2:00PM. The route is 2 kilometers long. There will be volunteers directing the route. To help out homeless Veterans, we are asking for donations. These include, but are not limited to: toothbrushes, toothpaste, socks, coats, and t-shirts (nonperishable items only please) which can be brought to the event. Employees, Veterans, family members, and members of the community

are welcome!



This is a free event.



Nationwide Recreation Therapy within The Medical Foster Home Program



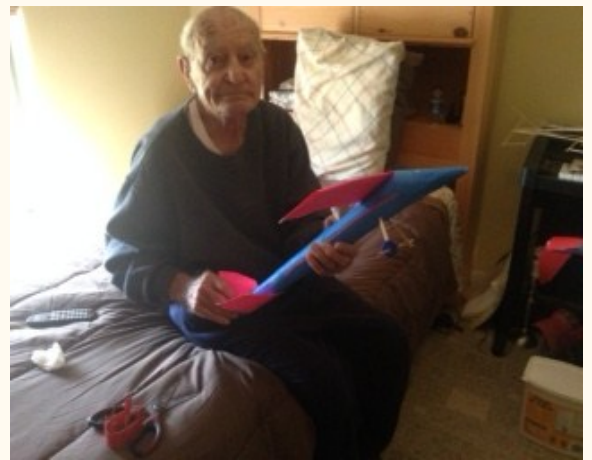
Above: Community outing to the Montana Auto Museum in Deer Lodge, MT. This MFH Veteran spent 2 hours viewing the exhibits, reading the signs and reminiscing about the cars he used to drive. There were over 150 cars to look at and they took 83 pictures! They printed all of the pictures so he could share his memories.



MFH Veteran playing Dominos in Orlando, FL



Above: This MFH Veteran has been married for 65 years. Veteran took his wife out for lunch for a Valentine's date.



Above: This Veteran enjoys making things with clay and a variety of objects he finds around the house. He is holding a plane that he made with paper, bamboo sticks and poster board.



Left: MFH dog, Cocoa. Pets can add a lot to quality of life within the MFH.

Below: Dallas & Fort Worth Recreation New Year Party. Games, food and entertainment were enjoyed by veterans, caregivers and MFH staff.



UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS

Upcoming Special Holidays:

April:

Alcohol Awareness Month
Counseling Awareness Month
National Donate Life Month
Parkinson's Awareness Month
Sexual Assault Awareness Month
Stress Awareness Month

1 April Fools' Day

3 Good Friday

5 Easter

15 Tax Day

16 Holocaust Remembrance Day

22 Earth Day

May:

Allergy and Asthma Awareness Month
Arthritis Awareness Month
National Mental Health Month
National Military Appreciation Month
Stroke Awareness Month

7 National Day of Prayer

8 Military Spouse Appreciation Day

10 Mother's Day

16 Armed Forces Day

25 Memorial Day

**27 National Senior Health &
Fitness Day**

June:

National Safety Month

Vision Research Month

Cataract Awareness Month

5 World Environment Day

7 National Cancer Survivors Day

14 Flag Day

21 Father's Day

21 Summer Begins

Future National Events

2015 Golden Age Games

When: August 8-12

Where: Omaha, Nebraska

Open to veterans 55 and older who are enrolled in VA healthcare

Caring for the Caregiver:

Everyday Activities That Strengthen Cognitive Skills

Fun and useful suggestions for activities that you can engage your resident's in.

Meaningful Conversation

Often as people age, they withdraw from social interaction, giving them fewer opportunities to talk to others about things that are important to them.

Below are some examples to enhance cognitive skills:

- ♦ Ask for your veterans opinions
and advice on situations and events.
- ♦ Use the opposite hand to hold the toothbrush when
brushing your teeth.
- ♦ Write your name.
- ♦ Dial a telephone.

Hobbies and Crafts

Learning a new hobby or taking up a craft are excellent ways for elderly individuals to keep their brains active and alert. Listed below are a few benefits:

- ♦ Provides enjoyment and positive self-esteem
- ♦ Maintain eye and hand coordination
- ♦ Improve fine motor skills

Depending on your veterans' interests and abilities, the following re examples of possible crafts or hobbies they may enjoy:

Games and Puzzles

Playing games and solving puzzles are excellent cognitive activities. These activities engage the brain keeping it stimulated and vital. The following are examples of games and puzzles:

Did you know....

www.VetTix.org is a national non-profit organization that provides **FREE** event tickets to veterans and their families all over the country. All you have to do is create an account by providing a valid government ID, and a copy of your Veteran Designation Documentation.

**FREE CONCERTS, SPORTING EVENTS,
PERFORMING ARTS, AND FAMILY
ACTIVITIES!!**

HOW WEATHER AFFECTS ALLERGIES

Do your eyes water on windy days? Are you always stuffy when it rains? That's no surprise. Weather is a common allergy trigger.

The connection between your symptoms and the weather depends on what you're allergic to. Here are a few common triggers:

- **Dry, windy days.** Wind blows pollen into the air, causing hay fever. If you have pollen allergies, shut the windows and stay indoors on windy days.
- **Rainy or humid days.** Moisture makes mold grow, indoors and out. Dust mites also thrive in humid air. But if you're allergic to pollen, humid or damp days are good. The moisture weighs down the pollen, keeping it on the ground.
- **Cold Air.** Many people with allergic asthma find that cold air is a problem, especially when they exercise outside.

It can trigger a coughing fit.

- **Heat.** Air pollution is worst on hot summer days. Ozone and smog can be a serious trigger for people with allergic asthma.

PARTY MIX RECIPE

Mix together in a large bowl:

5c Cheerios
1pkg (10oz) pretzels
2c corn Chex
2c salted peanuts
1pound bag of M&Ms

(Optional) Melt:

2 packages of white chocolate chips
3T oil

Instructions:

Coat dry ingredients with chocolate mixture and spread on foil or wax paper to set.

BAKED HONEY MUSTARD CHICKEN

Prep Time: 15m Cook Time: 45m Servings: 6

Ingredients:

6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup prepared mustard
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon dried parsley

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F
2. Sprinkle chicken breasts with salt and pepper to taste, and place in a lightly greased 9x13 inch baking dish. In a small bowl, combine the honey, mustard, basil, paprika, and parsley. Mix well. Pour 1/2 of this mixture over the chicken, and brush to cover.
3. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Turn chicken pieces over and brush with the remaining 1/2 of the honey mustard mixture. Bake for an additional 10 to 15 minutes, or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear. Let cool 10 minutes before serving.



Servings per recipe: 6

Total Fat: 3.7g

Total Carbs: 24.8g

Calories: 232

Sodium: 296mg

Protein: 25.6g

BRAIN TEASERS

Match the fruit and vegetables to its proper name!

1. Broccoli 2. Limes 3. Corn 4. Mango 5. Orange 6. Pineapple 7. Strawberry

A.



B.



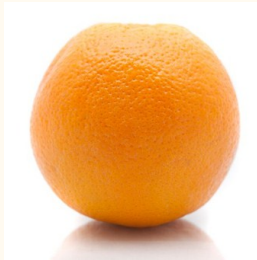
C.



D.



E.



F



G.



What's the Word?

1. Rain cover

U _ _ _ L _ _

2. Where you plant vegetables

G _ R _ _ _

3. Water on the ground

P _ _ D _ _

4. "April showers bring May ____"

F _ _ _ _ S

5. Yellow and black bug with a stinger

B _ _

6. Color of grass

G _ _ _ _

7. Easter ____ hunt

E _ _

8. Baby chicken

C _ _ C _

9. Month in spring

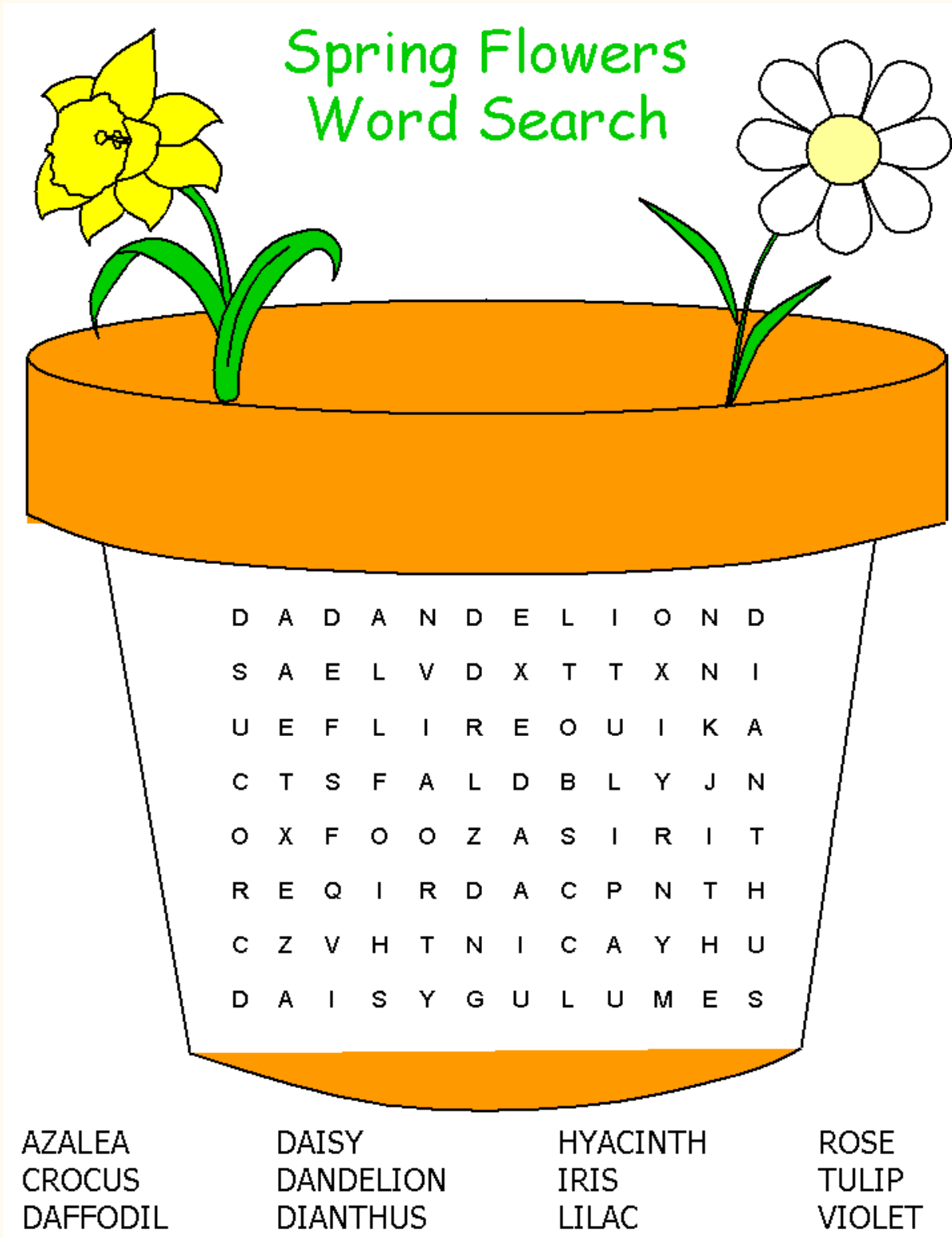
M _ _

10. ____ side up eggs

S _ _ N _ _

WORD SEARCH

Can you find any other words that are not listed below? Add them to the list as you work to find the other words!



ANSWERS

Match the fruit and vegetables:

1. C 2. F 3. B 4. G 5. E 6. D 7. A

What's the Word:

1. Umbrella 2. Garden 3. Puddle 4. Flowers
5. Bee 6. Green 7. Egg 8. Chick 9. May 10. Sunny



National Article Contributors:

Kaitlyn Kelton: Ft. Worth, TX (kaitlyn.kelton@va.gov)

Aysha McRoberts: Bay Pines, FL (aysha.mcroberts@va.gov)

Rebekah Wiggins: Asheville, NC (susan.wiggins@va.gov)

Feel free to email us with any suggestions, ideas or comments!

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for this edition's photos!**